



Next-of-Kin Interviews

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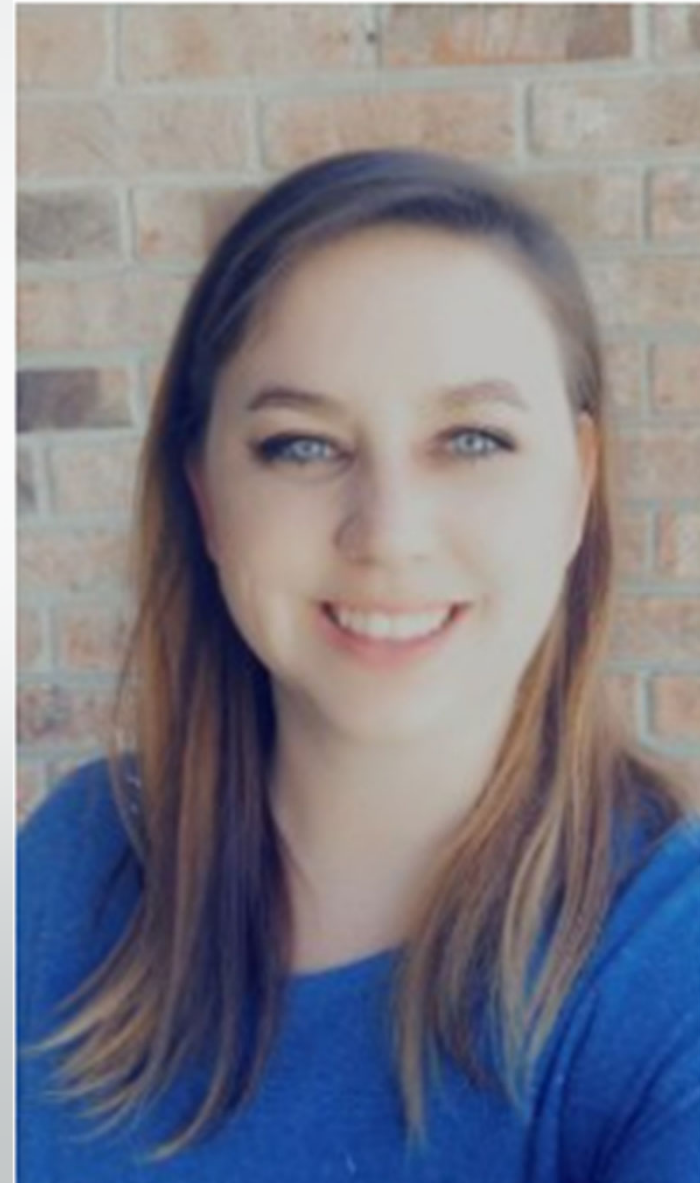
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Learning Objectives

After this webinar, participants should be able to:

- Describe the purpose and value of an overdose fatality review (OFR).
- Describe the purpose and value of a next-of-kin interview (NOK).
- Identify and locate available resources to conduct a NOK interview.

Agenda

- Introduce Today's Speakers
- Introduction of Overdose Fatality Review
- Next-of-Kin Interview 101
- Value of Completing a NOK Interview
- Resources for the Field
- Question and Answer
- Adjourn



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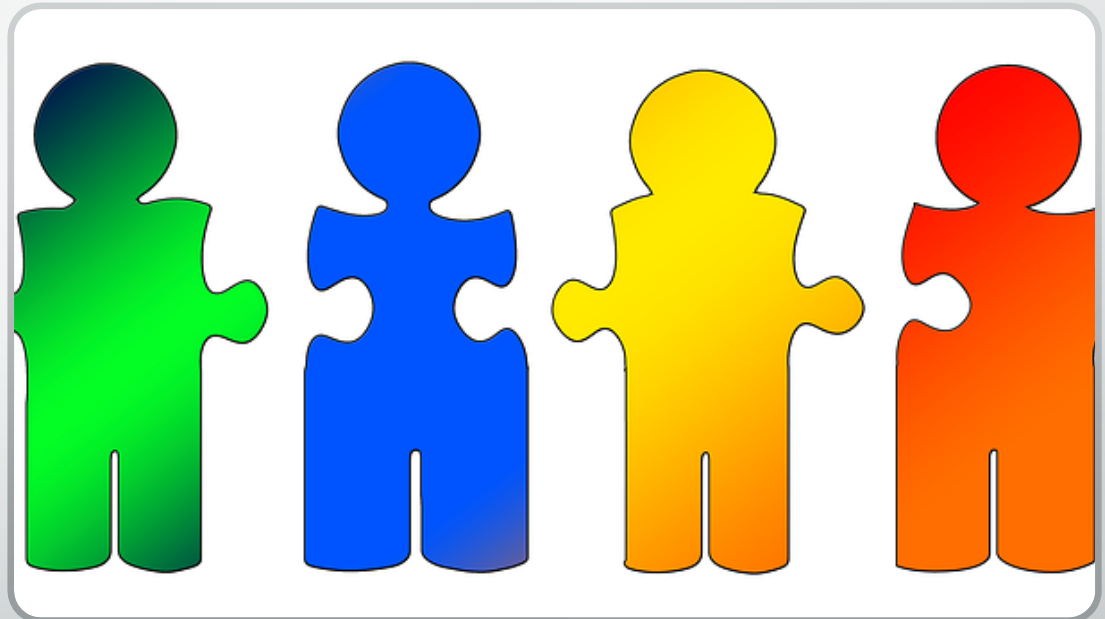
Overdoes Fatality Review (OFR)

Overdose Fatality Review Overview

- OFRs involve a series of **confidential individual death reviews** by a multidisciplinary team to effectively **identify system gaps and innovative community-specific** overdose prevention and intervention strategies
- These recommendations are presented to a governing committee that supports and provides resources for implementation framework for accountability for action

During the Review Process

- Case presentation
- Discuss delivery of services
- Develop recommendations





Next-of-Kin Interview

Not All Interviews Are the Same

- **Family Interview/NOK Interview**
 - Talking with a loved one, family member, or partner to learn additional information around the decedent's life and history to gain context
- **Social Autopsy**
 - Overlaying family interview (or multiple interviews) and social media, obituary, and other data sources to present a deeper understanding around the circumstances of a death
- **Psychological Autopsy**
 - A best practice postmortem procedure developed in 1960 by **American Association for Suicidology's** founding president, Dr. Edwin Shneidman, as well as Robert Littman, M.D., and Norman Farborow, Ph.D., and refined over the years since to reconstruct the proximate and distal causes of an individual's death by suicide or to ascertain the most likely manner of death

What is a NOK Interview?

- A NOK interview provides an in-depth look at how someone lived, their social supports, and the circumstances that lead to an overdose death
- Information that is gathered in the NOK interview:
 - Social supports
 - Life experiences
 - Relationship information
 - Mental health history
 - Medical history
 - Past suicide attempts
 - Environmental conditions





What the interview is NOT . . .

- The NOK interview is not an interrogation
- A group process—whenever possible—interview family members and or friends separately
- To be used with individuals under 18
- A place to make assumptions or draw conclusions based on the family member's attitude, behavior, or emotional state


Goals of NOK Interview

- Collect information about the decedent's life to identify factors that contributed to a death to identify missed opportunities for prevention and intervention
- Provide grief support to family members or loved ones following a fatal overdose
- Improve community and state-level response to overdose epidemic

Why Is a NOK Interview Needed?

- Records only contain so much information
- Lack of access to records
- No records exist for some cases
- Nontraditional prevention and touchpoints needed
- Expands the story and creates a more personal lens
- Need for better data!





The Value of Completing a NOK Interview for an OFR Team

Melissa Weisel

NOK Process

- Establishing logistics and consent process
- Selecting staff members in your organization that are qualified to conduct interview
- Identifying who would be appropriate to interview for the NOK interview
- Connecting with the identified individual
- Completing the interview
- Referring to grief support/services
- Storing the information
- Reporting findings to OFR team

NOK Interviewer Qualities

- Good, active listener
- Connects with individuals and establishes trust
- Communicates clearly
- Navigates uncomfortable or difficult conversations
- Encourages open conversation
- Reads body language and nonverbal cues
- Empathetic
- Establishes clear and reasonable boundaries and expectations
- Strong and effective written and verbal communication skills
- Culturally competent/humble and sensitive to diverse perspectives
- Practices and prioritizes self-care and effects of second-hand trauma

NOK Sample Questions:

Background Information

- Tell me about your relationship with John?
- How long have you known John?

Life Stressors

- What was happening the six months prior to John's death?

Medical History

- Was John getting any medical care?
- What was he being prescribed medications for?

Mental Health History/Substance Use History

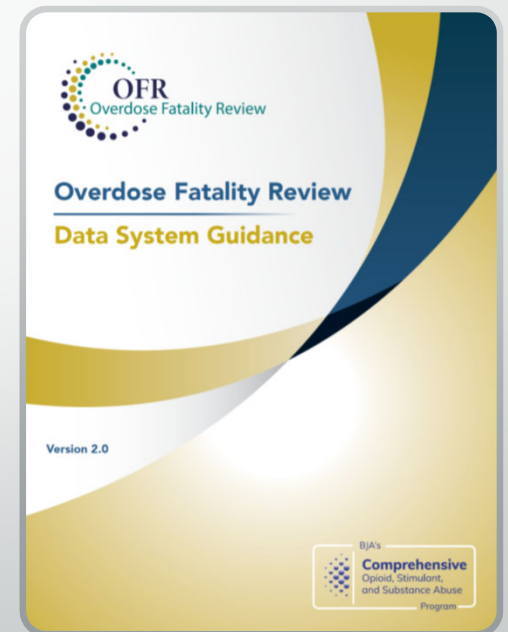
- Was John ever treated for drug addiction? Where? When?
- Did John have any known history or suicidal thoughts or attempts?
- Tell me about any mental health treatment in John's lifetime?

Recommendations

- What would you like the team to learn from John's death?
- What recommendations would you give to the city/county/state to help you or John?

Storing the NOK Data

- NOK data management plan:
 - How will NOK data security be maintained?
 - How will NOK data be collected?
 - Where will NOK data be stored?
 - How will NOK data be shared?
 - How long will NOK data be retained?



Utilizing in an OFR Team Meeting

- Present the Information
 - Create a narrative to share with the team
 - Use person-first language
 - Coordinate with OFR facilitator to know when the interview will be presented during the review process
 - Construct a timeline that shows an overview of the decedent's life and various touchpoints

Self-Care Strategies

- Schedule breaks throughout the day
- Engage in hobbies
- Learn to say “no”
- Nurture relationships with friends and family
- Exercise routinely
- Eat healthy, and drink water
- Laugh
- Practice meditation, yoga
- Read a good book
- Engage in positive self-talk
- Know your warning signs and triggers
- Find a peer you can relate and reflect with that you trust

Employer Support for Self-Care

Create Private Space

- Allow the interviewer, if preferred, to work from home whenever possible. A home setting can often provide more privacy than in most available workspaces
- Identify private spaces, such as a conference room or closed office, that can be reserved for interviews if work from home is not possible or when the interviewer is expected to work in an office around others

Support Flexible Work Time

- Allow and encourage interviewers to flex their work time around needed appointments that directly contribute to their self-care and work/life balance
- Consider the possibility of interviews occurring outside of regular business hours, and allow for flexibility in scheduling work time as appropriate

Diversify the Workload

- Have the workload include balance, and break up administrative tasks and conducting interviews. For example, if two interviews were held one day, consider the next day focusing on documentation and/or less intensive tasks

Provide Debriefing Opportunities

- Ensure interviewers have a mechanism for talking through the personal impact of the work by providing supervision or regular opportunities to debrief



Resources to Support NOK Interviews in the Field

Resources for the Field

- NOK Toolkit
 - How to guide to conducting a NOK
 - Sample templates
- NOK Module in the OFR Data System
- NOK Training series



NOK Toolkit

Six Key Principles of Trauma Informed Approach

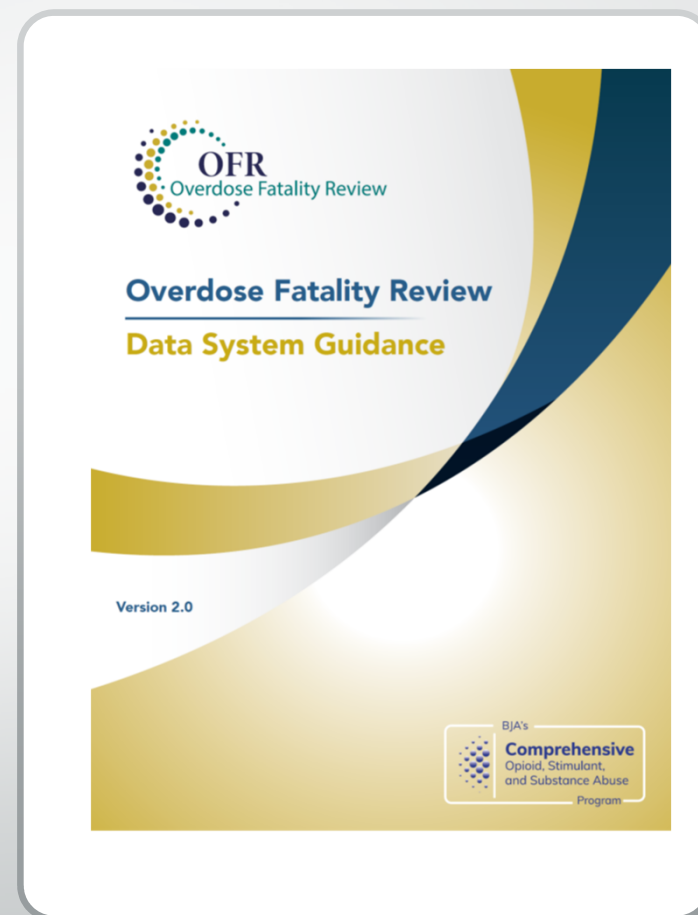
1. Safety
2. Trustworthiness and Transparency
3. Peer Support
4. Collaboration and Mutuality
5. Empowerment, Voice and Choice
6. Cultural, Historical and Gender Issues

- Module One: Why Conduct a NOK Interview?
- Module Two: Who Should Conduct a NOK Interview?
- Module Three: When to Conduct a NOK Interview?
- Module Four: How to Conduct a NOK Interview?
- Module Five: Where to Store a NOK Interview?
- Module Six: How to Use a NOK Interview?
- Module Seven: Self-Care for NOK Interviewers
 - Personal examples
 - Employer support examples
- Appendix

NOK Appendix

- Sample Job Description
- Sample Interview Questions for Applicants
- Sample Contact Letter
- Sample Script
- Sample ME/CO letter
- Sample Unable to Contact Letter
- Sample Consent Form
- Sample Bereavement/Grief Resources
- Sample Checklist of What to Take to an Interview
- Sample Crisis Protocol
- Sample NOK Questions
- Sample Script
- Sample Thank You Card
- Utah Bereavement
- Utah Card
- NOK Data Management Plan Template
- Sample Narrative Reporting Tool
- Sample Self-Care Assessment

NOK Module in OFR Data System



NOK Training Series

- 3-hour training series
 - Logistics of the NOK interview process
 - Interview Tool
 - Bereavement and Self-care
 - Mock Interview Practice with a Partner

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Questions?